

The Nature of Jointness

U.S. Navy (David Blencoe)

Jointness is at its strongest in the face of an enemy, and its foundations were laid during World War II. David Armstrong makes this argument in "Jointness and the Impact of the War." In "What Exactly Is Jointness?" Lawrence Wilkerson then picks up where Armstrong leaves off. Jointness is forged the same way as the bonds of combat—"in the cauldron of shared dangers, decisions, and death." It is also built on proficiency in one's own service capabilities. Without such an appreciation there can be no trust and understanding.

How understanding is developed in joint operations is at the heart of "Joint Warfare and the Army-Air Force Team," by Dennis Reimer and Ronald Fogleman. These service chiefs address cooperation in what has historically been the most contentious aspect of joint warfare, air-ground operations. They work through many of the difficult issues that have arisen in combat.

William Owens examines how interservice cooperation might be viewed to the benefit of all.

In his article "Living Jointness," he writes that the service components should be enablers whenever possible. That is, they "ought to operate continually with the purpose of aiding and facilitating operations of the other service components that will be involved in conflict."

Jointness has bounds, as Seth Cropsey reminds us in "The Limits of Jointness." It must strike a careful balance, particularly in peacetime. On the one hand, it must emphasize a concerted operational effort. On the other, it must not suppress debate over such fundamental issues as the composition and character of future forces.

In the final article, Frederick Strain goes where few have gone before in his article "The New Joint Warfare." He examines what joint warfare will mean in the future. As he observes, "The ability to conduct simultaneous operations across the depth, breadth, and height of the combat area compels professionals to change their perspective." **JFQ**